



**EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT COVER SHEET**

<b>Title of Report:</b>	Activity Report on Rough Sleeping Projects and the BES Homeless Partnership	To be marked with an 'X' by Democratic Services after report has been presented
<b>Meeting of:</b>	Corporate Management Team 22 September 2020	X
	Leader and Deputy Leaders 28 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2020	X
	Leader's / Leader of the Opposition's Advisory Group / Independent Alliance Advisory Group w/c 5 <sup>th</sup> Oct	X
	Cabinet 26th Oct 2020	
	Scrutiny Audit and Value for Money Council Services Committee / Scrutiny Community Regeneration, Environment and Health and Well Being Committee n/a	



Is this an Executive Decision:	NO	Is this a Key Decision:	NO
Is this in the Forward Plan:	NO	Is the Report Confidential:	NO
If so, please state relevant paragraph from Schedule 12A LGA 1972:	NA		

**Essential Signatories:**

**ALL REPORTS MUST BE IN THE NAME OF A HEAD OF SERVICE**

Monitoring Officer: **Angela Wakefield**

Date ..... Signature .....

Chief Finance Officer: **Sal Khan**

Date ..... Signature .....

**EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Report to Cabinet**

**Date: 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

**REPORT TITLE:** Activity Report on Rough Sleeping Projects and the BES Homeless Partnership

**PORTFOLIO:** Environment and Housing

**HEAD OF SERVICE:** Sal Khan

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Brett Atkinson Ext. No. x1123

**WARD(S) AFFECTED:** Multiple

**1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1. Provide an update on both the activities of the Burton and East Staffs Homeless Partnership, and the Council commissioned projects to reduce rough sleeping.

**2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1. Rough sleeping has been in precipitous decline since peaking at 16 in 2017, with 11 recorded in 2018 and 5 in 2019.<sup>1</sup> This decline has been driven by a number of factors, including:
- 2.1.1. A range of successful projects, which have largely been funded by the MHCLG's Rough Sleeping Initiative.
  - 2.1.2. The rise in voluntary and community activity, which has been harnessed by the Burton and East Staffs Homeless Partnership.
  - 2.1.3. Implementation of the Homeless Reduction Act in April 2018, and the recruitment of a Housing Outreach Officer to strengthen the Housing Options Team.
- 2.2. There are currently 4 year round rough sleeper projects, with a bid to add a further 2 projects due to be determined in the next month. The Partnership<sup>2</sup> is working effectively with 16 current members from across the range of local services available to homeless people.

<sup>1</sup> Based on the returns of the annual [Rough Sleeper Snapshot](#).

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.burton-es-homeless.co.uk/>

### **3. Background**

- 3.1. The Council does not have a duty<sup>3</sup> to secure accommodation for all homeless people, although there is a duty to provide advice and assistance in the form of a meaningful Personal Housing Plan that is monitored and updated. In some instances this means that individuals or couples are without accommodation and begin rough sleeping.<sup>4</sup>
- 3.2. In response to the particular difficulties experienced by rough sleepers, the Council has commissioned a Rough Sleepers Outreach Service for the past 4 years, the service works to minimise the amount of rough sleepers and reduce the associated harms by providing personal support. In the last couple of years the Council has been eligible to secure MHCLG funding via the Rough Sleeping Initiative programme,<sup>5</sup> and has attracted significant inward investment resulting in the projects detailed below. These projects have been instrumental in driving down rough sleeping, and in responding to the requirements of the pandemic.

### **4. Contribution to Corporate Priorities**

- 4.1. Environment and Health and Wellbeing.

### **5. Burton and East Staffs Partnership**

- 5.1. Burton and East Staffs Homeless Partnership<sup>6</sup> was formed out of a shared commitment to build a more collaborative approach. Representatives from key parties have come together to develop a partnership approach to tackling the issues of homelessness. The aim of this partnership is to offer a significant promise for an improved collaboration in the town on this critical issue and to raise awareness of services and interventions available to those who are homeless.
- 5.2. The Partnership has been instrumental in improving communication across the sector, this has been most effective in securing a move into settled accommodation from the Winter Night Shelter as well as responding to issues to troubled placements in supported accommodation where a transfer or other broader response is needed. Partnership meetings have also facilitated the dissemination of good practice, with a number of presentations having been delivered.
- 5.3. In order to raise awareness of the Partnership it was intended that there would be a publicity campaign, the first major activity that was undertaken was the

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<sup>3</sup> Duties as set out in the Housing Act 1996 Part VII.

<sup>4</sup> Since 2010, the figures used for national statistics have used this definition of rough sleeping: *People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments). People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or "bashes")*. The definition doesn't include; people in hostels or shelters, sofa surfers, people in campsites or other sites used for recreational purposes or organised protest, squatters or Travellers.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-government-initiative-to-reduce-rough-sleeping>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.burton-es-homeless.co.uk/>

Xmas Market Stall which was on Station St, Burton upon Trent on 20 December 2019.

5.4. Figure 1: BES Homeless Partnership Market Stall



5.5. The Xmas Market Stall was to be followed up with a social media campaign, and other promotional activities however the Partnership has since taken the decision to pause these plans due to the pandemic. The reasons expressed for this decision by members of the Partnership were as follows:

5.5.1. The space for charitable appeals is more crowded than usual due to the pandemic, and therefore the audience may be less receptive.

5.5.2. The visibility and needs of this group have diminished, as since the end of March there has been almost no one rough sleeping.<sup>7</sup>

5.5.3. The voluntary organisations within the Partnership are having to consolidate or change their activities, and therefore are not in a position to advertise the same.

5.6. The subgroup of supported accommodation providers has been reinstated to address problems arising within their accommodation, and to respond to new referrals. The Partnership remains intact and will monitor the situation closely as we move into recovery.

## 6. Rough Sleeper Outreach Service and the Navigator Role

6.1. The Rough Sleepers Outreach Service (RSOS) and the Navigator role are strongly related, with both services being provided by Burton YMCA<sup>8</sup> following a competitive tender exercise. The RSOS provides an immediate response to reports of rough sleeping with the ability to resolve the homelessness of individuals with a lower level need profile; whilst the Navigator provides a dedicated resource for entrenched and high need clients who need intensive and longer term interventions to access accommodation.

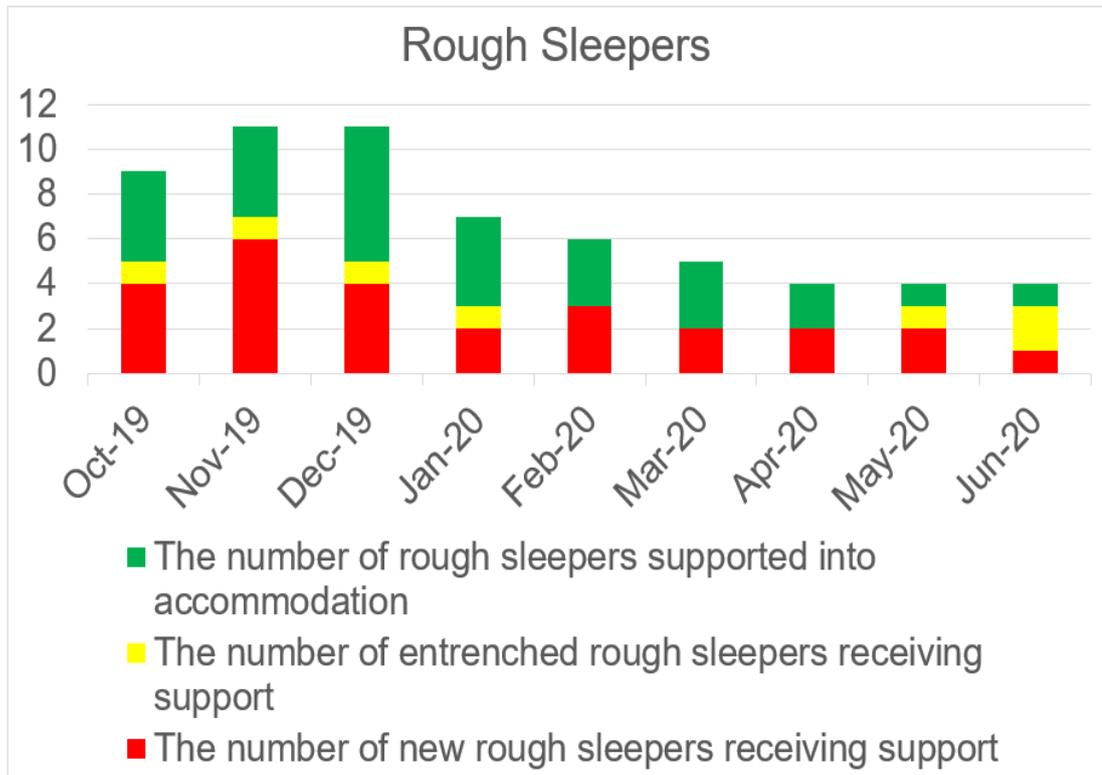
6.2. The RSOS has a named lead worker who is supplemented by volunteers and others as necessary. The RSOS conducts a 'sweep' for rough sleepers to locate individuals who have not been reported, and responds proactively to reports of

<sup>7</sup> The situation will fluctuate over time, but rough sleeper sweeps carried out by the YMCA over the relevant period have not found anyone sleeping rough. Many of this group will of course have residual needs once they are in accommodation and will require support to resettle in the community.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.burtonymca.org/>

rough sleeping by offering relevant assistance when contact is made. This service provides the Council with a local source of intelligence on the scale and nature of rough sleeping locally.

6.3. Figure 2: RSOS Service 2019-2020



6.4. The Navigator role is a full time post which focuses on select individuals that need more intensive support and assistance to access services such as drug and alcohol treatment and the benefits system. These additional services are frequently crucial to accessing accommodation, as accommodation providers need to believe the person is in a position to manage themselves and pay their bills. The Navigator has access to additional funds, known as personal budgets,<sup>9</sup> to facilitate engagement and enable him to meet any costs that are encountered as a part of the plan to be resettled in the community.

6.5. The Navigator role commenced in September 2019 and has supported 11 clients whose overall progress has been successful, with 6 clients having been successfully settled into accommodation. Of the remaining 4, 2 were receiving a higher level of support from the service than before and making good progress towards resettlement, one was still going through a variable process of trust-building with Navigator staff as at June 2020, and another client left their accommodation during the coronavirus crisis and their destination is unknown. The below levels of engagement with the Navigator are used to measure progress and identify the support the client is receiving.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/providing-personalised-support-rough-sleepers>

6.6. Figure 3: Progress with the Support of the Navigator

Client	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20
1	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
4	2	1	1	4	4	4	4	4	5
5	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	4
6	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	1
7	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5
8	0	2	2	0	4	4	4	4	4
9	0	0	0	0	4	4	4	4	0
10	1	2	2	0	1	1	1	1	4
11	0	3	3	0	1	1	1	1	4

Level	Description
0	not in a position to receive support (e.g. in custody/hospital) or apparently left area
1	not engaging with support
2	engaging on 1 or more issues
3	engaging and specifically applying for accommodation
4	successfully housed (not just night shelter) and continuing to receive support
5	signed off support as no longer entrenched rough sleeper

6.7. As can be observed, a successful pathway into accommodation is not a straight line of continuous progression, the role of the Navigator is to maintain communication and break through resistance by being a consistent helpful presence over time.

6.8. During lockdown the Navigator has had 7 EU nationals on his case load who faced additional barriers to accessing service because of a lack of documents, and the requirements around exercising treaty rights in order to qualify for benefits.<sup>10</sup> In 4 cases the Navigator has succeeded in regularising their status, obtaining benefits and accommodation. Since the end of March, the Navigator's work has been redirected to former rough sleepers who need assistance reintegrating into society, and residents of supported accommodation with challenging behaviour who are at risk of losing their accommodation.

6.9. The Navigator has funding until the end of March 2021, and the RSOS is funded until the end of October 2022.

## 7. Housing First

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2019/861/made>

- 7.1. Housing First is an approach to providing housing and support, which prioritises access to stable accommodation over the requirement for an individual to first address any other support needs they have, e.g. it is not required that the individual is engaging with drug treatment.<sup>11</sup> The intervention is shown to be successful<sup>12</sup> for people experiencing repeat homelessness (such as multiple evictions from a hostel setting) and multiple disadvantage, providing an independent home alongside intensive support that is free from conditions apart from the willingness to sustain a tenancy.
- 7.2. Due to its relatively high costs and intense levels of support, Housing First is not considered the most suitable option for all people experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping. When Trent and Dove HA were selected as the delivery partner for this project it was agreed that the project would target the most prominent rough sleepers who had 'cycled through' the existing local services without succeeding, whilst acknowledging and mitigating the risks these individuals presented.
- 7.3. On 1 September 2019, a support worker was appointed for the 5 tenancies to be created in the first year. The support worker began by engaging with the individuals and building trust, with all 5 tenancies starting between October 2019 and January 2020. All 5 former rough sleepers remain in their tenancies to date, with none identified as currently being at risk of eviction.<sup>13</sup>
- 7.4. The support worker has provided tailored individual support based on need, and whilst there have been some setbacks including an alleged 'cuckooing'<sup>14</sup> incident on the whole the cohort have been making good progress. Two clients are at stage where training or employment is being considered, and one client has been assessed by Adult Social Care and is now receiving care calls to facilitate his daily life. One person who is on the project told his story to the Burton Mail,<sup>15</sup> which includes an account of being trafficked into the UK.
- 7.5. The Housing First project is to create 2 further tenancies in the next phase, which is currently funded until the end of March 2021.

## **8. Night Shelter & 'Everyone In'**

- 8.1. The Night Shelter is a cold weather provision which has been in operation for the past three winters<sup>16</sup> based at the Parish Church of Saint Paul, Burton upon Trent, DE14 2EQ. The Night Shelter provision is flexible and responsive to need, having been utilised by 67 people equating to 688 'stays'<sup>17</sup> during the winter of 2019/20.

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<sup>11</sup><https://hfe.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/Housing%20First%20England%20FAQs.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> <https://hfe.homeless.org.uk/general-research-reports>

<sup>13</sup> As at 6 August 2020.

<sup>14</sup> Tactic where a drug dealer (or network) takes over a vulnerable person's home to prepare, store or deal drugs. Commonly associated with exploitation and violence.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.derbytelegraph.co.uk/burton/burton-man-escapes-brutal-traffickers-3763763>

<sup>16</sup> Period of operation is 1 December through to 31 March in each case.

<sup>17</sup> A bed occupied overnight

8.2. Figure 4: Night Shelter 2019/20

	Total	Detail	Detail	Detail
Total number of individuals	67			
Where a subsequent move recorded		37		
<b>moved into short-term accommodation</b>			22	
of which supported housing				18
out of area				3
entrenched rough sleeper				1
<b>moved into long-term accommodation</b>			9	
of which returned home				6
out of area				2
private rented sector				1
<b>other</b>			6	
hospital				1
out of area				3
prison				2

- 8.3. As can be seen 35 individuals were successfully resettled in the community; much of this work taking place at a subgroup of the Burton and East Staffs Homeless Partnership specifically formulated to facilitate resettlement and reduce the length of the guests' stay.
- 8.4. On the 26th March 2020, five nights prior to the planned closure of the Night Shelter, the Council received a letter from Minister Hall<sup>18</sup> requiring the closure of all such facilities to enable social distancing, protect the guests and support the nationwide lockdown that began three days earlier on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020. The 'Everyone In' (EI) program initially had seven clients, six guests at the Night Shelter and one gentleman who insisted on sleeping rough. The Night Shelter closed on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020 with staff redirecting anyone attending to the Council's Housing Options Team who would then provide the client an en-suite hotel room.
- 8.5. Over the days and weeks that followed many more people who were vulnerably housed<sup>19</sup> presented, as well as people who became homeless during the pandemic. In total 36 people have been resettled<sup>20</sup> under the EI program with a number of avenues having being utilised, the primary route being a continuation of the Partnership arrangements that were utilised during the Night Shelter's period of operation. It should be noted that these numbers only apply to individuals who would not ordinarily be provided with temporary accommodation under the legislative arrangements; presentations from households owed a duty to temporary accommodation are not counted as an EI recipient.
- 8.6. After careful consideration, the 'Everyone In' program was closed to new homeless presentations on 22nd May 2020 meaning that after this date

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/letter-from-minister-hall-to-local-authorities>

<sup>19</sup> Lodging, staying temporarily with friends or family or otherwise not in secure accommodation

<sup>20</sup> Settled accommodation is accommodation which will be available for 6 months or longer and can take a variety of forms, including in one case receiving a custodial sentence.

standard legislative arrangements apply, including the Homelessness Reduction Act. A sweep of the borough undertaken by the Rough Sleepers Outreach Service on 4th August did not find anyone sleeping rough, and this has been true for the last few months. A sweep typically includes a comprehensive walk-through of Burton, as well as a team going across to Uttoxeter and Rocester and the periphery of Burton. It is intended that the proposals at section 10 will support the retention of the gains made under EI.

## **9. Home4Me Service**

- 9.1. East Staffordshire already had a range of re-housing pathways working to address individuals with low to medium needs who are new to the streets, but there was a 'gap' for entrenched rough sleepers and others with a high need profile who have a history in the area. To meet this need the Council was successful in securing MHCLG funding to commission 10 units of high needs accommodation to run for twelve months in Burton.
- 9.2. The 'Home4Me' model has been imported from Derby where it has had significant success, and crucially the worker who set up the project in Derby has been seconded to East Staffs to deliver the project. The additional funding per client is to facilitate more hours of specialist support which both increases the likelihood of positive changes for the client, but also mitigates against the risks accepted by the accommodation provider. The project has accepted challenging KPIs in the context of the client group; a minimum of 7 people accessing Home4Me accommodation must sustain their accommodation for 3 months or more, and a further 4 people must sustain accommodation for 6 months or more.
- 9.3. Delivery of bed spaces was delayed by the impact of lockdown on the housing market, but clients in hotel accommodation under EI were supported pending the availability of bed spaces. The 'Home4Me' support worker was reassigned to deliver services in the hotel which was beneficial in securing a smooth transition into settled accommodation, but also to manage the overall dynamic in the establishment. Five such cases were resettled directly into the project, the remaining 5 bed spaces to be made available and occupied in the short term.

## **10. Next Steps Accommodation Programme**

- 10.1. The Next Steps Accommodation Programme<sup>21</sup> (NSAP) make resources available to help ensure some of the most vulnerable people in society continue to have a roof over their heads following EI, and are helped into long term accommodation. NSAP includes separate funds for: (1) shorter-term and interim accommodation, reconnections and immediate support into sustainable move-on options such as the private rented sector; and (2) longer-term move on accommodation, including capital for acquisitions, refurbishments and new

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<sup>21</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/news/jenrick-launches-266-million-housing-fund-for-vulnerable-people?utm\\_source=c022b05f-c195-4c6b-8ab1-4d7a99b62488&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/jenrick-launches-266-million-housing-fund-for-vulnerable-people?utm_source=c022b05f-c195-4c6b-8ab1-4d7a99b62488&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)

build, and an attached long-term revenue stream to ensure people are supported in their new tenancies.

10.2. The Council has submitted a bid for both (1) and (2); that is short term emergency bed spaces and a joint bid with Trent & Dove HA for longer-term move on accommodation.

10.2.1. Short Term Emergency Bed Spaces: The funding proposal is to adopt a 'No First Night Out' approach, effectively replicating the arrangements under 'Everyone In.' This means that people stating they have no accommodation available to them will be made an offer of emergency accommodation if they are not eligible for the same under the applicable legislation and duties. This will initially involve offering a hotel room pending procurement of emergency bed spaces in supported accommodation. Once successfully procured, there will be 3 supported bed spaces and they are expected to be available from 1 Nov 20 until 31 Mar 21.

10.2.2. Longer-Term Move On Accommodation: Through coproduction with the MHCLG, the Council has identified the need to improve the pathways out of shared supported accommodation for former rough sleepers. This will involve securing the provision of a second stage of supported accommodation in the journey to independent living and reintegration with the community. Shared supported accommodation is normally the first accommodation that rough sleepers enter into and is therefore known as Stage 1, crucially Stage 2 accommodation is not shared and involves the individual managing their own home, bills etc. with support. To this end, the funding will enable Trent & Dove to purchase 10 self-contained 1 bedroom flats to be used as Stage 2 accommodation for the next 30 years.<sup>22</sup> If successful, there will also be funding for a support worker across the 10 properties up to 31 March 2024.

10.3. The outcome of the funding application is due to be published during September 2020.

## **11. Financial Considerations**

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<sup>22</sup> Homes England funding will be paid direct to Trent & Dove, and the 30 year commitment will be binding on them.

*This section has been approved by the following member of the Financial Management Unit: Anya Murray.*

- 11.1 The council has been successful in obtaining external funding from the MHCLG for the following projects:

<b>Project</b>	<b>Latest approved bid</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Housing First Intervention	7 months to 31 March 2021	£28,000
Navigator Service	6 months to 31 March 2021	£23,292
Cold weather provision	1 December to 31 March 2021	£30,000
Home4MeService	1 year to 31 March 2021	£43,000

No contribution is currently made by the council. Therefore if there is no funding made available by MHCLG for future years then the projects will cease.

- 11.2 The Rough Sleeper Outreach Service is supported by S106 Affordable Housing monies until October 2022. The last contract awarded was valued at £80,000 over 3 years.
- 11.3 The Next Steps Accommodation programme comprises a bid for £509,832 supported by S106 monies of £50,000.

## **12. Risk Assessment and Management**

- 12.1. The main risks to this Report and the Council achieving its objectives are as follows:
- 12.2. **Positive** (Opportunities/Benefits):
- 12.2.1. The projects detailed in this report have several months of operation remaining, creating further opportunity to embed the gains that have been made.
- 12.2.2. If the NSAP bid is successful it will create a long term asset, as well as providing suitable accommodation over the winter period.
- 12.2.3. The Burton & East Staffs Homeless Partnership provides a forum for coordinating the widest possible response to homelessness across the town.
- 12.3. **Negative** (Threats):
- 12.3.1. The NSAP bid is unsuccessful, and no additional funding is forthcoming.

- 12.3.2. That the projects which are funded until 31 March 21 are not renewed, and come to an end.
- 12.4. The risks do not need to be entered in the Risk Register. Any financial implications to mitigate against these risks are considered above.
13. **Legal Considerations**
- This section has been approved by the following member of the Legal Team:  
Linda Durham*
- 13.1. There are no significant legal issues arising from this Report.
14. **Equalities and Health**
- 14.1. **Equality impacts:** The subject of this Report is not a policy, strategy, function or service that is new or being revised. An equality and health impact assessment is not required.
- 14.2. **Health impacts:** The outcome of the health screening question does not require a full Health Impact Assessment to be completed. An equality and health impact assessment is not required.
15. **Human Rights**
- 15.1. There are no Human Rights issues arising from this Report.
16. **Sustainability** (including climate change and change adaptation measures)
- 16.1. Does the proposal result in an overall positive effect in terms of sustainability (including climate change and change adaptation measures) N/A
17. **Recommendation(s)**
- 17.1. That members note the progress that has been made in reducing rough sleeping, and supporting the recovery of the individuals affected.
18. **Background Papers**
- 18.1. The Homelessness Strategy 2018 - 2023
- 18.2. The Housing Strategy 2015 - 2020
19. **Appendices**
- 19.1. Appendix 1: Interrelationship Diagram